



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

S/S

September 15, 1977

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TO: P - Mr. Habib
FROM: D/HA - Patt Derian

Mark-up of Indochinese Parole Action
Funding Stalled

Jim Carlin and Shep Lowman testified today before the House Sub-committee on Foreign Operations in support of our \$6.3 million FY 78 supplemental appropriation to complete the funding for the 15,000 Indochinese parole program. The Sub-committee had planned to mark-up this item immediately following the testimony. Instead, the mark-up has been postponed indefinitely. The reason given is that the Sub-committee wishes to have the question of funding for domestic benefits to Indochinese now in this country settled before appropriating funds to bring further Indochinese refugees here. Thus, they wish to await final action on both the authorization and appropriation bills submitted by HEW.

Initial funding for the Indochinese parole program is to be covered by \$7.2 million in refugee emergency funds. The Secretary's request for a Presidential Determination in this amount is now at the NSC and is expected to be forwarded for signature shortly.

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Concurrence: H - Mr. Krizek

The dilapidation of the physical facilities contributes to extremely unsanitary living conditions...windows are broken and unscreened, creating a serious problem with mosquitoes and flies. Old and filthy cotton mattresses lead to the spread of contagious diseases and body lice. Nearly all inmates' living quarters are inadequately heated and ventilated. The electrical systems are totally inadequate, exposed wiring poses a constant danger to the inmates, and insufficient lighting results in eye strain and fatigue.

The prisons are overrun with roaches, flies, mosquitoes, and other vermin. Plumbing facilities are in an exceptional state of disrepair. In one area...housing well over 200 men, there is one functioning toilet. Many toilets will not flush and are overflowing. Some showers cannot be turned off and continually drip or even pour water. Frequently there is no hot running water for substantial periods of time. Witnesses repeatedly commented on the overpowering odor emanating from these facilities.

Food is improperly stored in dirty storage units, and is often infested with insects. Mechanical dishwashers are not adequately maintained and therefore do not even approach the minimum temperature required for proper sanitation. Moreover, food service personnel, many of whom are inmates, are often untrained and do not follow proper sanitation procedures in the handling and preparation of food. Inmates are not supplied with reasonable eating and drinking utensils; some inmates drink from used tin cans, and have to wash and save their own utensils from meal to meal. Garbage sits in large open drums throughout the dining halls. As a general rule, the food is unappetizing and unwholesome. Inmates with some source of funds may supplement their diets from the prison canteen, but the large majority must subsist only on what is supplied by the kitchen...

One expert witness, a United States public health officer... found these facilities wholly unfit for human habitation according to virtually every criterion used for evaluation by public health inspectors.

Violent inmates are not isolated from those who are young, passive, or weak. Consequently, the latter inmates are repeatedly victimized by those who are stronger and more aggressive. Testimony shows that robbery, rape, extortion, theft, and assault are everyday occurrences among the general inmate population. Rather than face this constant danger, some inmates voluntarily subject themselves to the inhuman conditions of prison isolation cells.